

over 18 million people the food that keeps them alive in Haiti, Darfur, Afghanistan, Guatemala, Ethiopia, Kenya, and elsewhere. We would be turning our backs on countries where we made commitments to help boost the production of their own small farmers so they could finally free themselves of having to depend on U.S. and international food aid to feed their own people.

Enough, Mr. Speaker, enough.

This isn't a question of charity. It's an issue of national security, of what happens when desperate people can't find or afford food, and the anger that comes from people who see no future for their children except poverty and death.

I ask President Obama to stand up for his programs and fight for them. I ask the White House to hold a global summit on hunger, nutrition, and food security. I ask the media to wake up and grasp the consequences of these shortsighted cuts. And I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to fund these programs so they can be successful. It really is a matter of life and death.

[From the New York Times, Feb. 24, 2011.]

THE FOOD CRISIS

Food prices are soaring to record levels, threatening many developing countries with mass hunger and political instability. Finance ministers of the Group of 20 leading economies discussed the problem at a meeting in Paris last week, but for all of their expressed concern, most are already breaking their promises to help.

After the last sharp price spike in 2008, the G-20 promised to invest \$22 billion over three years to help vulnerable countries boost food production. To date, the World Bank fund that is supposed to administer this money has received less than \$400 million.

Food prices are now higher than their 2008 peak, driven by rising demand in developing countries and volatile weather, including drought in Russia and Ukraine and a dry spell in North China that threatens the crop of the world's largest wheat producer. The World Bank says the spike has pushed 44 million people into extreme poverty just since June.

In 2008, 30 countries had food riots. That has not happened, at least not yet. Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, has benefited from improved agricultural productivity. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization warns that Mozambique, Uganda, Mali, Niger and Somalia are extremely vulnerable to instability because of rising prices, along with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in Asia, and Haiti, Guatemala, Bolivia and Honduras in Latin America.

Misguided government policies could make matters worse. Some countries are stockpiling food. When India did that last year, food ended up rotting in storages. Others are imposing agricultural export bans, which discourages investment in production. The world's wealthier nations must press them to rethink these policies and back that up with real help.

The Obama administration has proposed worthy initiatives, but even when Democrats controlled Congress it had a hard time getting the money. The administration pledged \$3.5 billion to the G-20 effort. So far, it has delivered only \$66.6 million to the World Bank fund.

It is now asking for \$408 million for the fund—part of a \$1.64 billion request for its

Feed the Future initiative, which aims to bolster poor countries' food production capabilities. Congressional Republicans are determined to hack as much as they can out of foreign aid. The continuing resolution passed by the House cuts \$800 million out of the food aid budget—bringing it down to about \$1 billion, roughly where it was in 2001.

The White House needs to push back hard. This isn't a question of charity. It is an issue of life or death for millions of people. And the hard truth is that if the United States doesn't keep its word, no one else will.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, last week Secretary of Defense Gates spoke at West Point, and I would like to quote one comment from his speech:

"In my opinion, any future Defense Secretary who advises the President to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should 'have his head examined,' as General MacArthur so delicately put it" years ago.

Again, this is Secretary Gates. I have great respect for Secretary Gates. I think he is one of the true outstanding Secretaries of Defense this country has ever had.

Mr. Speaker, the reason I'm here today, I bring a photograph of a flag-draped coffin—it's called a transfer case—being escorted off a plane at Dover Air Force Base.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to bring our troops home. They have been in Afghanistan for over 10 years. I would also say it is time that this Congress met its constitutional responsibility to debate war and whether we should be there or bring our troops home.

In recent weeks, I was very concerned to hear our government and military leaders saying that it could be 2014 before we start significantly downsizing our troops in Afghanistan. Mr. Speaker, that brings to my mind trips to Walter Reed in Bethesda. So I will ask this question:

How many more young men and women must lose their legs, their lives for a corrupt government that history has proven will never be changed? Why should they be dying and losing their legs for Karzai, who doesn't even know that we're his friends? It makes no sense.

I will quote a highly decorated retired military general who has been advising me on Afghanistan for the past year:

"What is the end state we are looking to achieve? What are the measures of effectiveness? What is our exit strategy? Same old questions, no answers. What do we say to the mother and father, the wife of the last marine killed to support a corrupt government and corrupt leader in a war that can't be won?"

Mr. Speaker, these are words from a general that fought in Vietnam for this

country, that reached the highest he could in the branch of service where he served.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I represent the Third District of North Carolina, the home of Camp Lejeune Marine Base. Recently, I was with a marine who has served this Nation for years. He shares my concern about getting out of Afghanistan. So I asked this marine if he would write me a letter, and this is what he wrote:

"Congressman JONES, I am writing this letter to express my concern over the current Afghanistan war. I am a retired Marine officer with 31-plus years of active duty. I retired in 2004 due to service limitations or I am sure I would have been on my third or fourth deployment by now to a war that has gone on for too long."

I will quote end, Mr. Speaker, of his letter to me:

"The Afghanistan war has no end state for us. I urge you to make contact with all of the current and newly elected men and women to Congress and ask them to end this war and bring our young men and women home. If any of my comments will assist in this effort, you are welcome to use them and my name."

His name is Dennis G. Adams, Lieutenant Colonel, Retired, United States Marine Corps.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I want to remind those on the floor of the House today that I hope, if you haven't had the chance, that you will go to Walter Reed in Bethesda to see the young men and women that will never walk again, to see the young men and women that maybe will not ever think properly again because of PTSD and TBI.

And I want to remember the young soldier, 22 years old, a private in the United States Army, who before I walked in the room, the escort, Major Mack, said to me: This soldier has no body parts below his waist. They've all been blown away.

□ 1040

So, Mr. Speaker, it's time for the Congress to meet its responsibility and demand a debate on the floor of the House about bringing our troops home from Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, as I always do, as I look at this beautiful photograph of a soldier who gave his life for this country and the escort team, God, please bless our men and women in uniform. God, please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. God, please hold in Your loving arms the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

God bless the House and Senate that we will do what is right in Your eyes for today's generation and tomorrow's generation. I ask God to give wisdom, strength, and courage to President Obama that he will do what is right in the eyes of God.

And three times I will ask, God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.

RECENT FISCAL HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, first I want to congratulate the gentleman from North Carolina for the remarks he just made. He is a Republican and I am a Democrat, but I will tell you this: We are friends, and we work together. And he is one of the most conscientious Members of this House, who follows his conscience and his moral values in making decisions. He gave a very moving and important speech on the floor today. I thank the gentleman, Mr. JONES, from North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, when I come to the floor to speak about our country's recent fiscal history, I am often told there is no point in looking back. But Majority Leader CANTOR got it entirely right when he wrote this: "The future will not be won by repeating the mistakes of the past." The future will not be won by repeating the mistakes of the past. Unfortunately, however, we are proceeding on a path that shows little inclination to live by those words.

Once again, our Republican colleagues are using the language of fiscal responsibility, but pursuing policies of fiscal irresponsibility. Our colleagues across the aisle trumpet the \$100 billion in domestic discretionary spending they voted to cut from our budget. However, their actions belie those words. Their very first action in this new Congress was to approve policies, a rule package, that would provide for borrowing an additional \$5 trillion, unpaid for. Their budget policy would give us the worst of both worlds.

On the one hand, they failed to take on the real fiscal challenges. And, very frankly, there is blame to share across this Chamber, Republicans and Democrats, for failing to take on those challenges. But the policies they're pursuing would even make our situation worse. On the other hand, the cuts they do make are taken out of vital investments that would grow our economy and create jobs. As I will mention later on, some 700,000 to 800,000 jobs over the next 18 months, it is projected, would be cost by the adoption of their policies. This combination is not new. It is a repeat of Republican fiscal policy in the past.

Let's look at the evidence. First of all on deficits, what this chart shows is everything below this line is a deficit. Everything above this line is a surplus. Obviously, what you want is the deficit going down into surplus. What you don't want is going from surplus into deficit. You will notice that the Reagan administration, Reagan-Bush, are noted in this first red quadrant, and the Clinton administration going from deep debt to surplus, then the Bush administration going from surplus into deep debt. And the Obama administration trying to get out of the extraordinarily tanking, receding economic status, invested in bringing us out, and now we see us coming out.

It shows how the fiscally responsible policies adopted under President Clinton took us into surplus. It unfortunately shows that when we reversed those policies in 2001, we then went back into deep deficits. We all know how those predictions that Republicans made when we adopted this economic program, for which none of the Republicans in the House or the Senate voted for, they said economic catastrophe would occur. That was their analysis. That was their economic prediction. In fact, exactly the opposite happened, and we created 22 million new jobs for Americans. This deficit chart also shows how our record surplus was squandered during the Bush administration.

The second chart I want to show you talks about government spending. We have to cut spending. We all know that. We all talk about it. But let's look at who actually did cut government spending.

Again, government spending was up and down, but at a rate higher than it was under the Clinton administration where spending, as a percentage of our gross domestic product, almost without exception, went down. So when we talk about spending, we have a record of restraining and cutting spending. In fact, that was a partnership, frankly, because Republicans agreed to make compromises with the Democratic President.

However, when they controlled the Presidency, the House, and the Senate, you will see that spending went up sharply once again. Again we see government spending as a percentage of the economy rising under President Bush, and after the emergency measures needed to respond to the recession, starting to come down after the recession was ameliorated.

Real median wages. I want to show this chart as well. Because, after all, these are nice statistics, but what does it do for people? What is the impact on them? Real median wages sort of stuck. And I will end with this and complete the rest of my statement later, Mr. Speaker. But you will see that median wages under President Clinton's administration went up, and then they were flat. And they are going up again now under President Obama. Too slowly to be sure.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue these remarks, because if we do not learn from the past, if we repeat the failed policies of yesterday, our people will not be well served.

IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. QUAYLE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUAYLE. Mr. Speaker, a little more than a week ago this House passed a continuing resolution with \$100 billion in spending cuts. Not only was this an important step towards reining in our Nation's paralyzing defi-

cits, it also sent a clear signal to job creators that House Republicans are determined to foster an economic environment where certainty and confidence can return to the marketplace.

When a young family looks for a new neighborhood, they examine a variety of factors. They might ask about how safe it is. They might want to know about the school system or whether their neighbors are friendly. The broader question being: What is the environment like?

Job creators take a similar approach when they decide whether it's safe to invest capital, expand their businesses, and hire new workers in America. Just as a family is not going to choose a neighborhood with overflowing sewers and a high crime rate, a business owner is not going to expand and invest in an economic environment marred by debt-fueled uncertainty that will increase the costs to run their business. After all, deficits are just deferred tax payments that eventually come due.

We must ensure that America is the most attractive and safest place to start a business, take risks, and invest capital. It is essential that we send a clear signal to American businesses that both parties are committed to removing the barriers to job growth and economic development.

□ 1050

Republicans believe—and I would argue the American public believes—that cutting spending is a crucial step in that process.

Yesterday, Mark Zandi released a study which argued that the Republican spending cut plan would cost jobs. I am sure Mr. Zandi is a nice enough person, but in recent years, he hasn't seen a spending increase he didn't like. He was the Democrats' go-to guy when they were looking for an economist to endorse the stimulus, and he even endorsed a second stimulus package after the initial \$1 trillion package was signed into law. So before my Democrat colleagues start touting Mr. Zandi's report, I suggest they look at his record on the so-called stimulus.

By merely debating spending cuts for the past few weeks, this body engaged in a process that many feared was obsolete. Some have said Republicans are trying to cut too much, others, that we are not cutting enough; and, indeed, we still have a long way to go to get our deficits and debt under control.

But what no one can dispute, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that we are serious about cutting spending. In addition to the \$100 billion in cuts Republicans have offered over the next year, we have also made clear that our upcoming budget will include serious, commonsense entitlement reforms.

All of these efforts have one goal in mind: producing an environment conducive to economic growth and job creation. House Republicans are doing what we were sent here to do, and that's precisely what our job creators need: clarity and decisive leadership